



DARK NIGHTS

1

BATMAN

THE MURDER MACHINE

METAL
TIE-IN

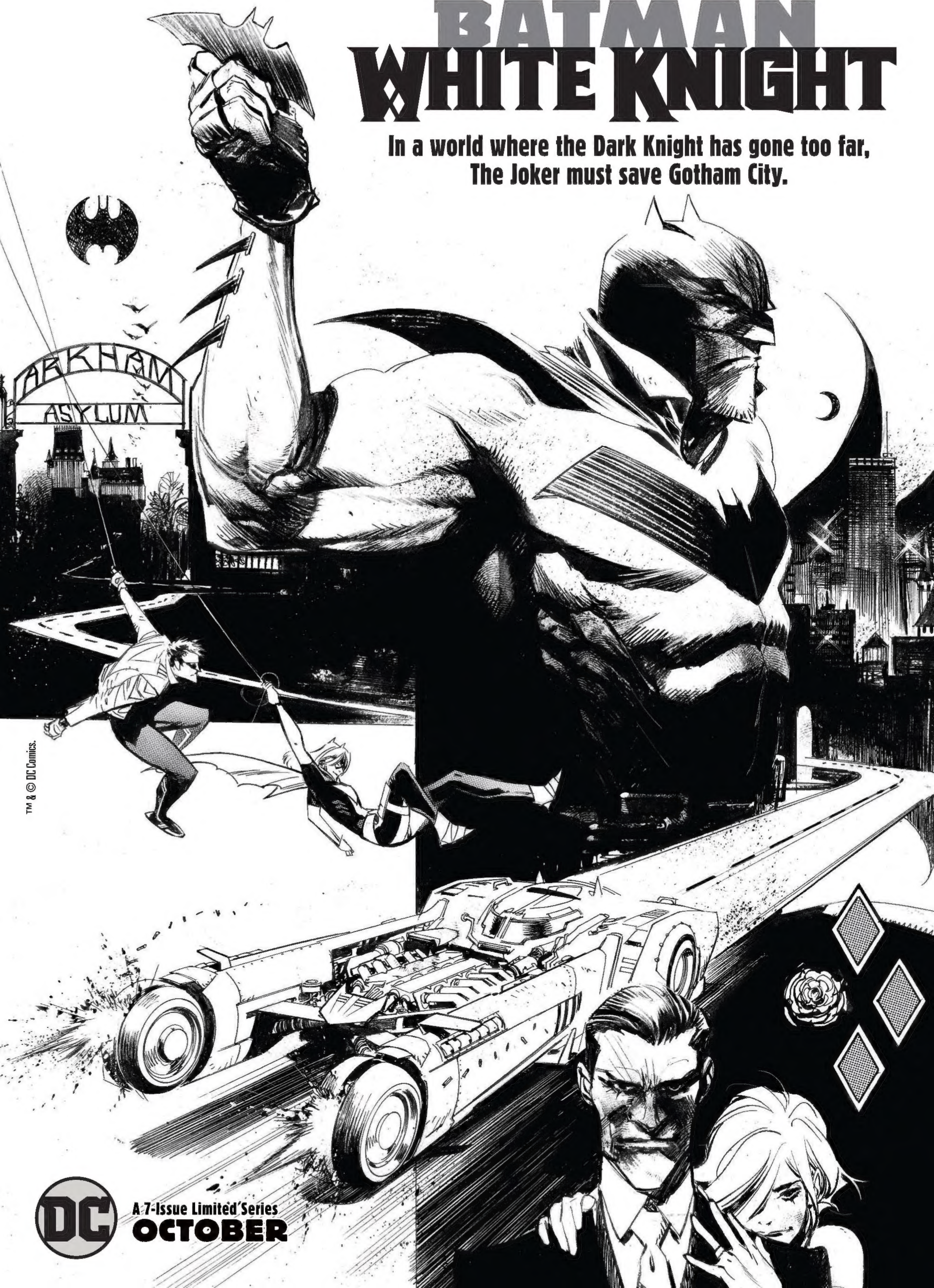
Tieri
Federici
Berredo

FROM VISIONARY WRITER/ARTIST

SEAN MURPHY

BATMAN WHITE KNIGHT

In a world where the Dark Knight has gone too far,
The Joker must save Gotham City.



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A 7-Issue Limited Series
OCTOBER



DARK NIGHTS

1

BATMAN™ THE MURDER MACHINE



Tieri
Federici
Beredo



EARTH-0. First World of the Multiverse.
S.T.A.R. Labs.
Detroit.

RINGING

DAD,
WHAT'S THAT
RINGING?

JUST ONE OF A
THOUSAND ALARMS
THAT GO OFF IN HERE
EVERY DAY. PROBABLY SOME
PUNK M.I.T. STUDENT WHO
THINKS HE CAN GET A
JOB IF HE BREAKS
INTO MY WORK
STATION.

DON'T GIVE
IT A SECOND
THOUGHT.

DAD. I TOLD
YOU. YOU NEED
TO GET OUT OF
S.T.A.R. LABS
NOW.

SOMETHING
SERIOUS IS GOING
ON. SOME KIND OF
INVASION. CITIES
ARE FALLING.

THAT
IS **PRECISELY**
WHY I'M STAYING
PUT. I WANT TO
UNDERSTAND
WHAT'S GOING
ON HERE.

I
CAN **HELP**
YOU.

IT'S THE METAL, ISN'T
IT? THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID
THE BLACKHAWKS TOLD YOU
LEAGUERS. METAL VIBRATING
AT THE FREQUENCY OF AN
UNDISCOVERED PLANE
OF EXISTENCE.*

IN
CASE YOU'VE
FORGOTTEN, VICTOR,
I'VE WORKED WITH
OTHERWORLDLY METALS
IN THE PAST. A FEW
OF THEM ARE RIGHT
IN YOUR CHEST.

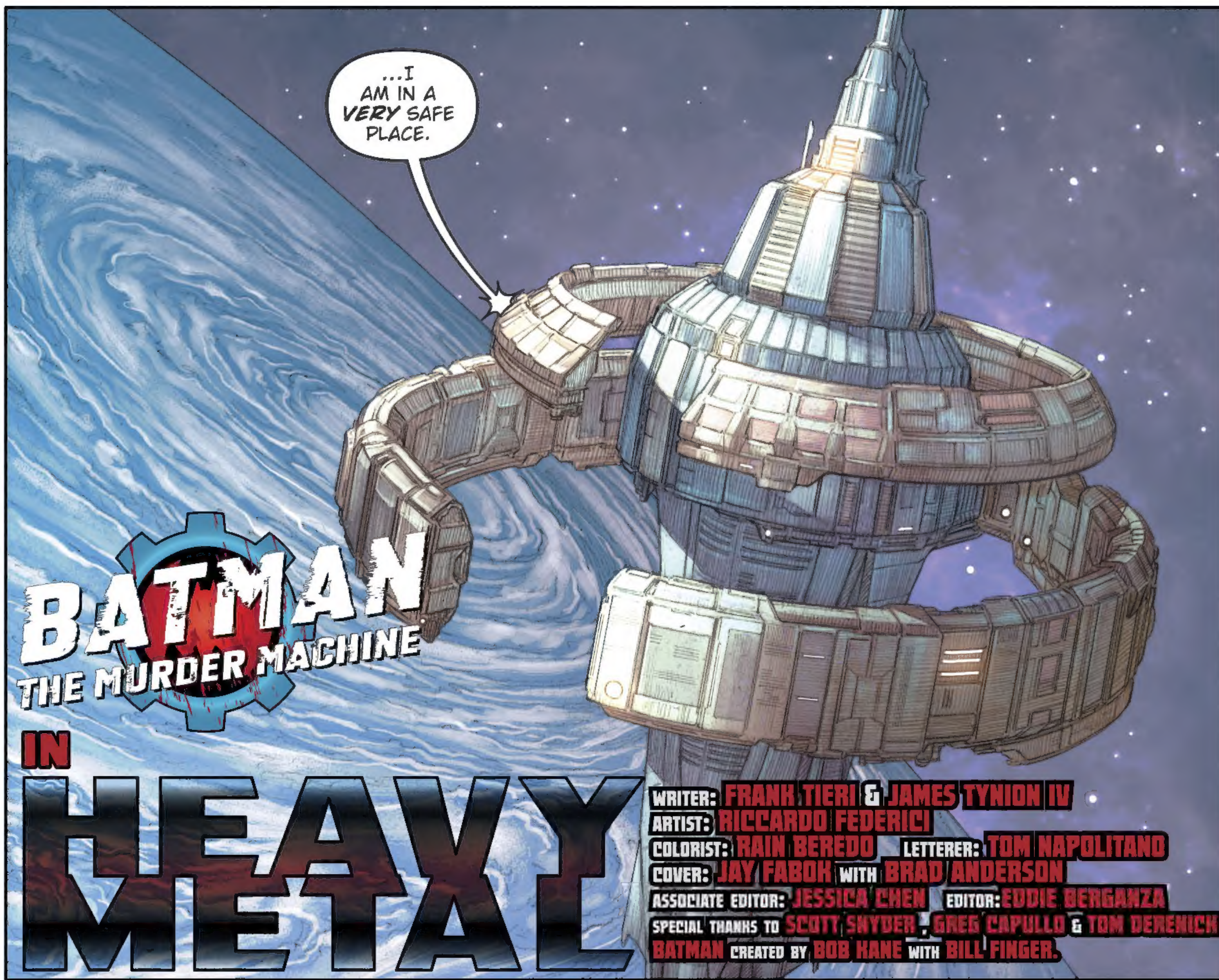
HARD
TO FORGET,
DAD...

* METAL #1 -- EDDIE.

I AM AN OLD MAN SITTING
IN PROBABLY THE BEST
PROTECTED LABORATORY IN
NORTH AMERICA. **YOU'RE**
THE ONE WITH MISSING
TEAMMATES.

I CAN
PROTECT YOU
FROM MY OFFICE.
PUT ALL THE
POWER OF S.T.A.R.
LABS BEHIND
YOU.

DAD, I
PROMISE
YOU...



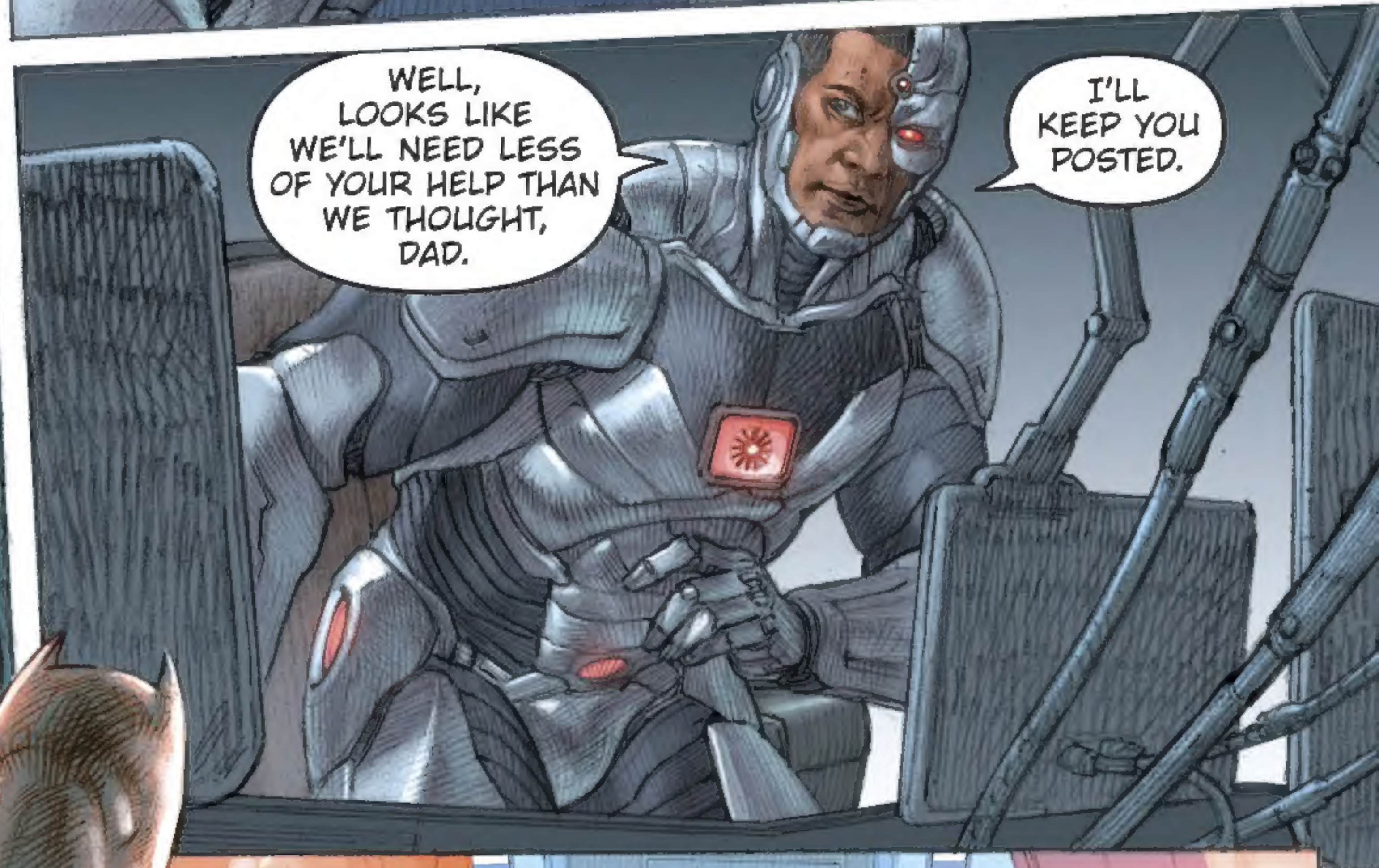
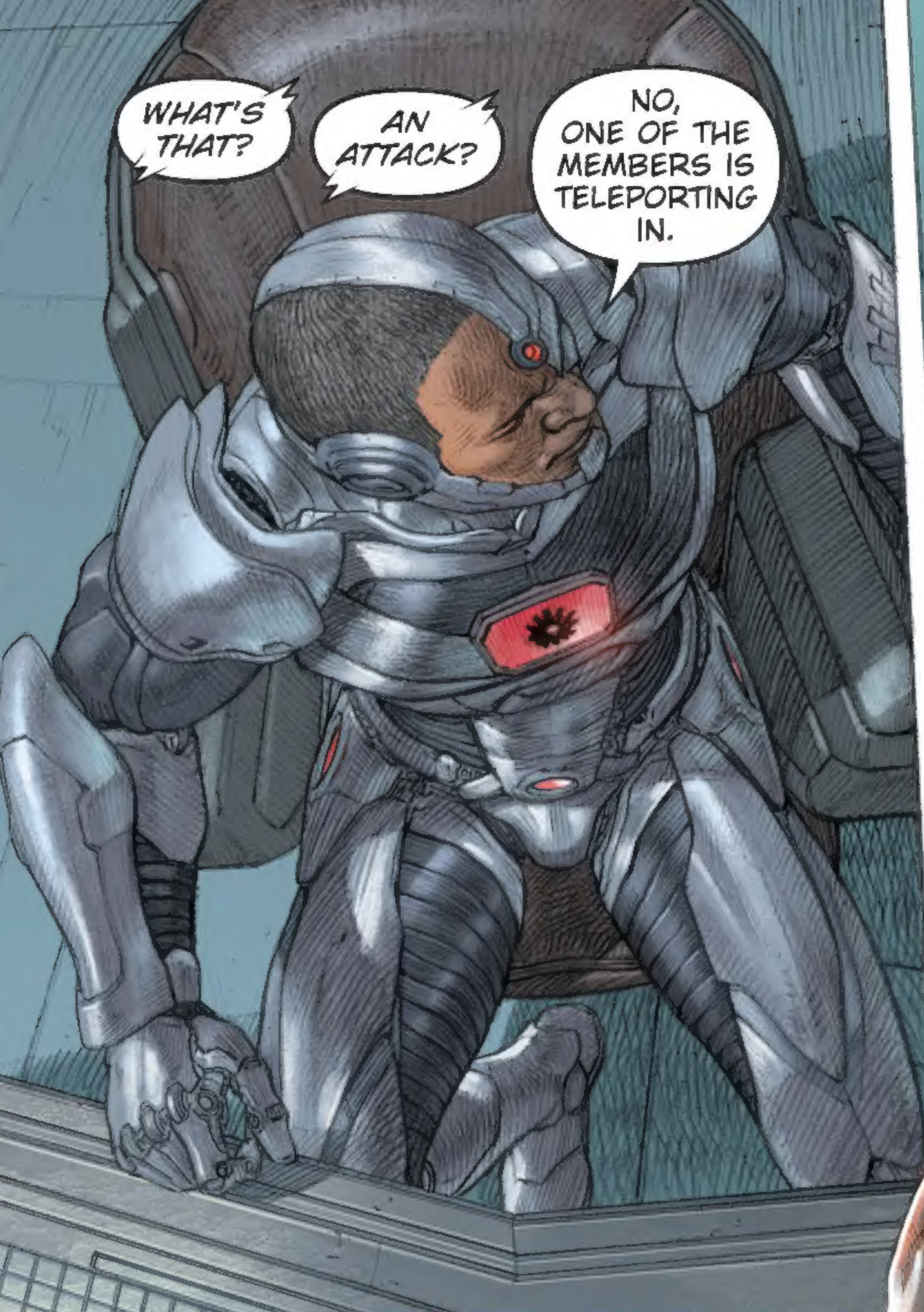
BATMAN

THE MURDER MACHINE

IN HEAVY METAL

WRITER: **FRANK TIERI & JAMES TYNION IV**
ARTIST: **RICCARDO FEDERICI**
COLORIST: **RAIN BEREDO** LETTERER: **TOM NAPOLITANO**
COVER: **JAY FABOK WITH BRAD ANDERSON**
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: **JESSICA CHEN** EDITOR: **EDDIE BERGANZA**
SPECIAL THANKS TO **SCOTT SNYDER, GREG CAPULLO & TOM DERENICH**
BATMAN CREATED BY **BOB KANE** WITH **BILL FINGER.**







DON'T
WORRY,
CYBORG.



I'M
HERE TO
HELP.

EARTH -44.

THE DARK MULTIVERSE.
Months Ago.

I DUNNO
ABOUT YOU,
JEEVES...BUT I
CAN DO THIS
ALL DAY.

NUH-
UH, WALLY
GATOR. SAVE
SOME FOR THE
REST OF
US.

ENOUGH
OF THIS. NOW
TELL US WHERE
BATMAN IS BEFORE
WE REALLY GET
ROUGH.

UHH...
BATMAN? WHAT
PRAY TELL...
AHH...IS A
BATMAN?

PERHAPS
THERE IS
ANOTHER WAY
I CAN BE OF
SERVICE.



PLAY AGAIN.

BRUCE...



...THIS HAS TO STOP.



CLARK IS RIGHT, BRUCE. WE'RE CONCERNED.

WATCHING THIS OVER AND OVER AGAIN--IT'S NOT HEALTHY.

"I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S NOT HEALTHY, CLARK."

"IT'S NOT HEALTHY TO STAND HERE KNOWING THAT THE MAN WHO RAISED ME LIKE A FATHER IS IN A CASKET UPSTAIRS WITH 36 SHATTERED BONES."

"THAT WE COULDN'T HAVE AN OPEN CASKET BECAUSE HE WAS BEATEN TO A PULP SIX FEET FROM WHERE YOU'RE STANDING NOW."

MY WHOLE LIFE, HE'S BEEN THERE FOR ME. NO MATTER WHAT I HAD DONE, NO MATTER HOW ANGRY I HAD MADE HIM. I WOULD RING, AND HE WOULD COME.

IT'S NOT HEALTHY TO KNOW THAT HE WON'T BE THERE ANYMORE...

...AND THAT IT'S MY FAULT.

BUT NOW YOU HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO HONOR HIM BY PUTTING HIM TO REST.

BRUCE, WHAT HAPPENED TO ALFRED WAS HORRIBLE.

THE REST OF US ARE GOING TO BE UPSTAIRS AT THE WAKE.

I HOPE YOU'LL JOIN US.

VIC, WAIT...

...A FEW YEARS AGO, I BEGAN A SCAN OF ALFRED'S MIND. TO CREATE AN **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** THAT MIGHT OUTLAST HIM. BUT IT WAS NEVER FINISHED.

I CALLED IT THE **ALFRED PROTOCOL**.

WHAT ARE YOU ASKING ME, BRUCE?

I CAN'T BRING HIM ONLINE BY MYSELF. I NEED YOUR HELP...

...PLEASE, VIC. I **NEED** HIM.

HE WAS LIKE A **FATHER** TO ME.

VICTOR!

VICTOR, WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

HELLO,
DR.
STONE.

YOU
KNOW, YOUR SON
VICTOR WAS ONE OF MY
CLOSEST FRIENDS. HE
HELPED ME WHEN
NO ONE ELSE
WOULD.

HE
REUNITED ME
WITH MY FATHER,
AFTER I HAD
THOUGHT I'D
LOST HIM.

IT IS
STRANGE, I
ADMIT, SEEING
CYBORG
AGAIN.

DON'T
YOU HURT
HIM!

I...I CAN
HELP YOU! I
CAN GIVE YOU
ANYTHING YOU
WANT!

HOW
CAN I HELP
YOU?!

MUTE
TRANSMISSION.

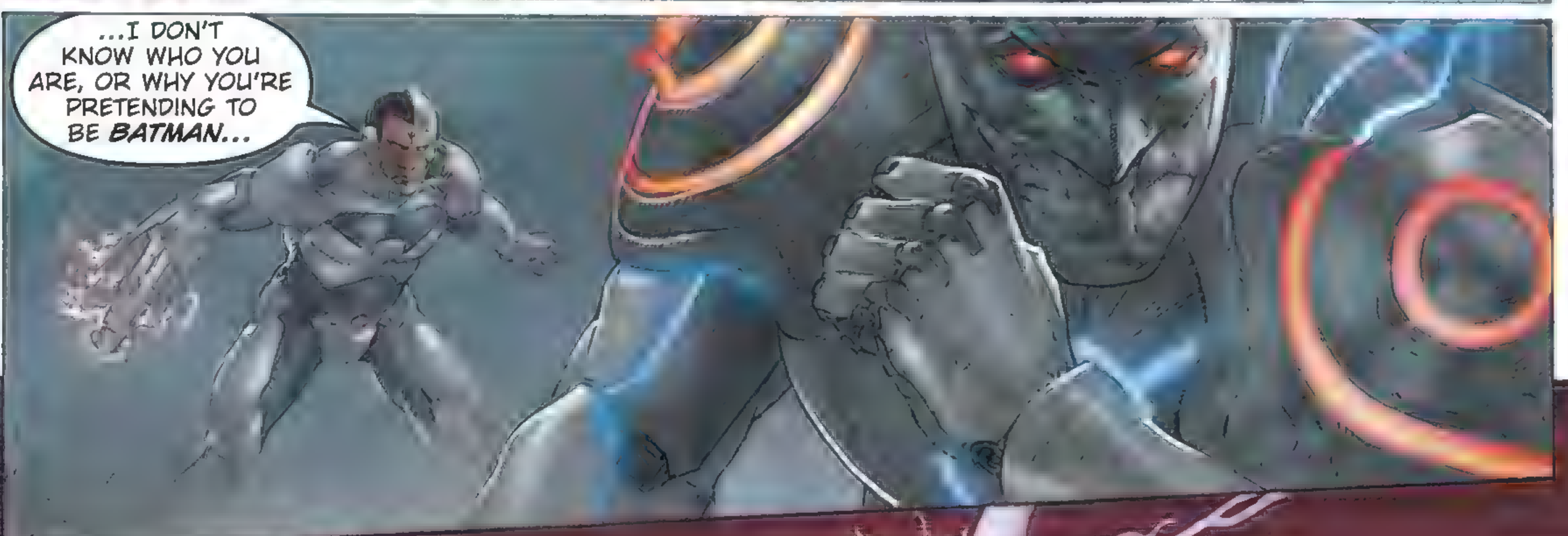


YOUR FATHER
WILL LEARN HIS
ROLE SOON
ENOUGH. AS
WILL YOU.

YEAH...

WAK

BOOM



...I DON'T
KNOW WHO YOU
ARE, OR WHY YOU'RE
PRETENDING TO
BE **BATMAN**...

...BUT YOU'RE NOT
GETTING **NEAR** MY
FATHER.



YOU ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD, VICTOR. EVEN ON MY WORLD, THE POWER BETWEEN FATHERS AND SONS. WHEN I LOST MINE, YOU WERE THE ONE TO BRING HIM BACK TO ME...

...GIVE HIM SHAPE AND FORM. A POWERFUL MACHINE, CAPABLE OF PERFORMING ANY TASK I MIGHT NEED, WITH THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE MAN DEEP INSIDE WHO LOVED ME.

WITH YOUR HELP, WE WOULD NEVER HAVE TO PART WAYS AGAIN. HE WOULD BE WITH ME... A PART OF ME... FOREVER.

NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS RING FOR HIM AND HE ARRIVES.

HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

WHAT THE HELL... ALFRED?!

HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

**Earth -44.
A Month Ago.**

HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

L-LOOK.
I'M NOT GOING TO
GO AFTER BATMAN
ANYMORE, SEE?

I'M
GOING TO
THE AIRPORT
NOW.

HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

GOING
HOME TO SANTA
PRISCA.

HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

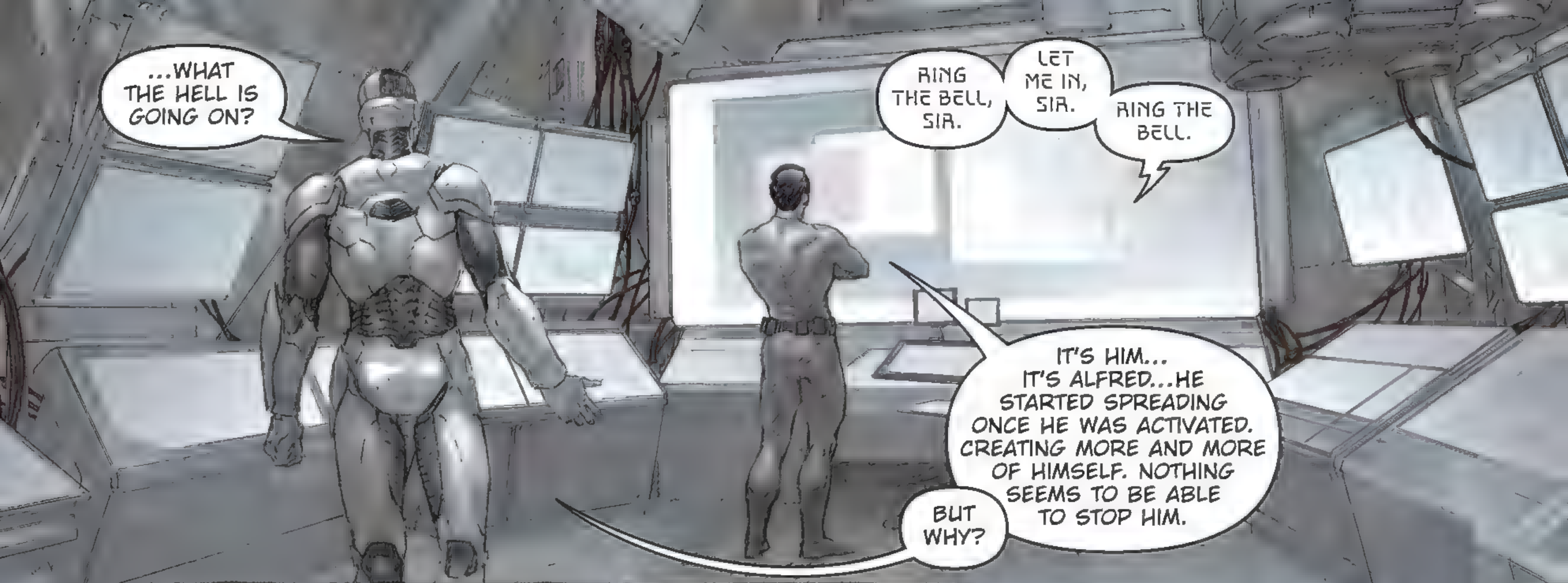
HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

Y-YOU DON'T
HAVE TO KILL
ME, TOO...

...I'LL
LEAVE.

HOW
MAY I HELP
YOU?

BRUCE...



...WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?

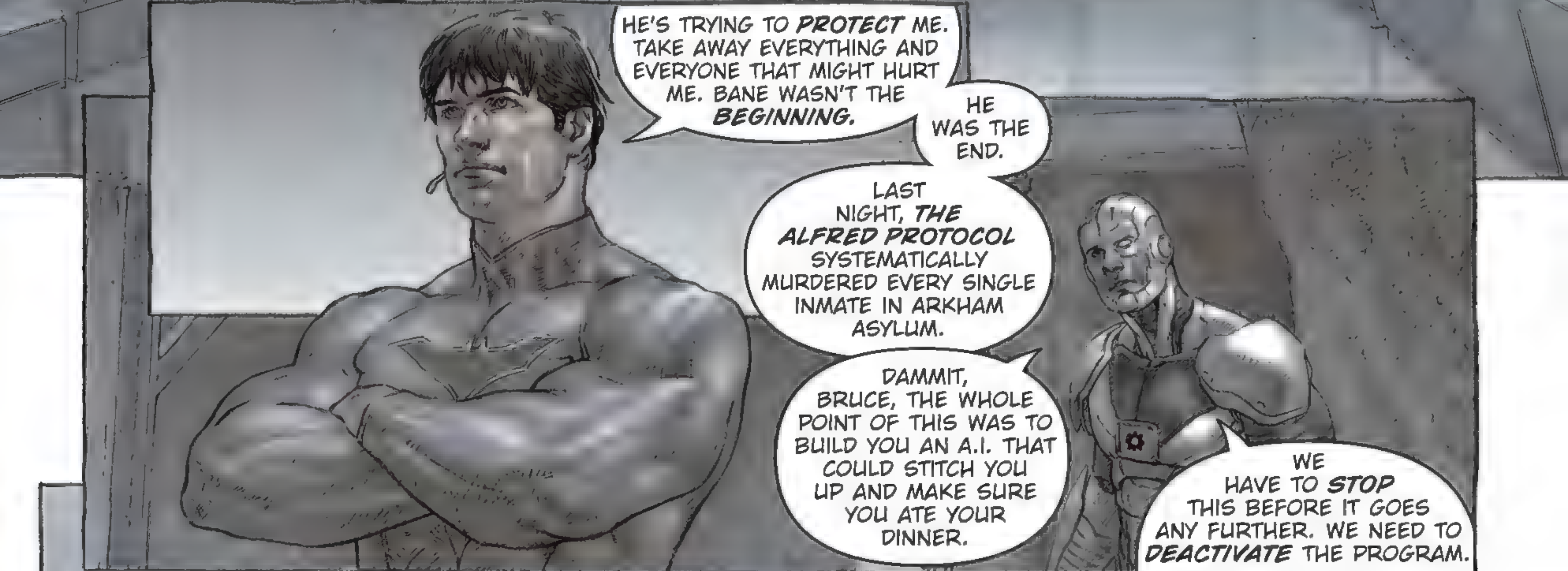
RING THE BELL, SIR.

LET ME IN, SIR.

RING THE BELL.

IT'S HIM... IT'S ALFRED... HE STARTED SPREADING ONCE HE WAS ACTIVATED. CREATING MORE AND MORE OF HIMSELF. NOTHING SEEMS TO BE ABLE TO STOP HIM.

BUT WHY?



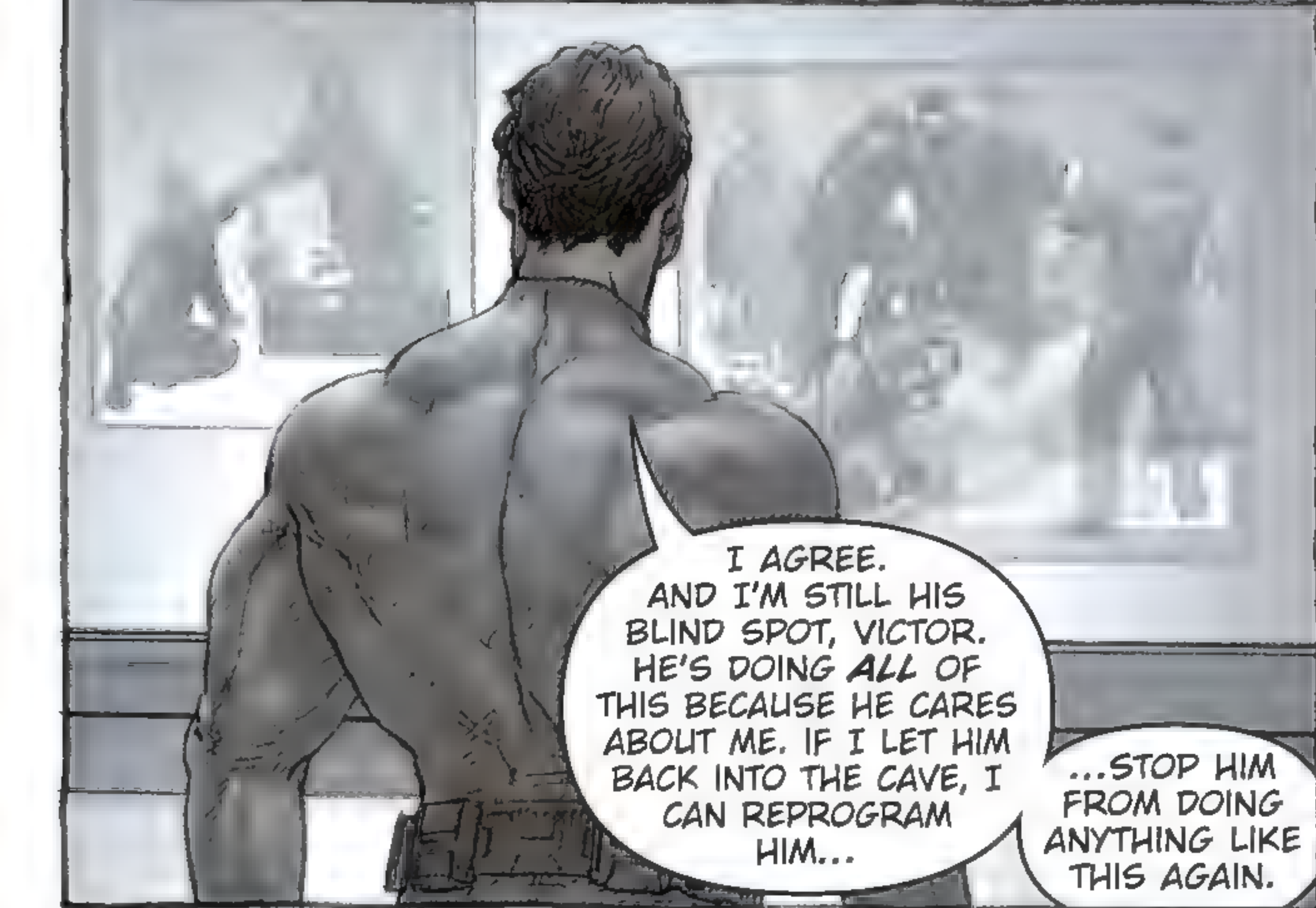
HE'S TRYING TO *PROTECT* ME. TAKE AWAY EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE THAT MIGHT HURT ME. BANE WASN'T THE *BEGINNING*.

HE WAS THE *END*.

LAST NIGHT, THE *ALFRED PROTOCOL* SYSTEMATICALLY MURDERED EVERY SINGLE INMATE IN ARKHAM ASYLUM.

DAMMIT, BRUCE, THE WHOLE POINT OF THIS WAS TO BUILD YOU AN A.I. THAT COULD STITCH YOU UP AND MAKE SURE YOU ATE YOUR DINNER.

WE HAVE TO *STOP* THIS BEFORE IT GOES ANY FURTHER. WE NEED TO *DEACTIVATE* THE PROGRAM.



I AGREE. AND I'M STILL HIS BLIND SPOT, VICTOR. HE'S DOING *ALL* OF THIS BECAUSE HE CARES ABOUT ME. IF I LET HIM BACK INTO THE CAVE, I CAN REPROGRAM HIM...

...STOP HIM FROM DOING ANYTHING LIKE THIS AGAIN.

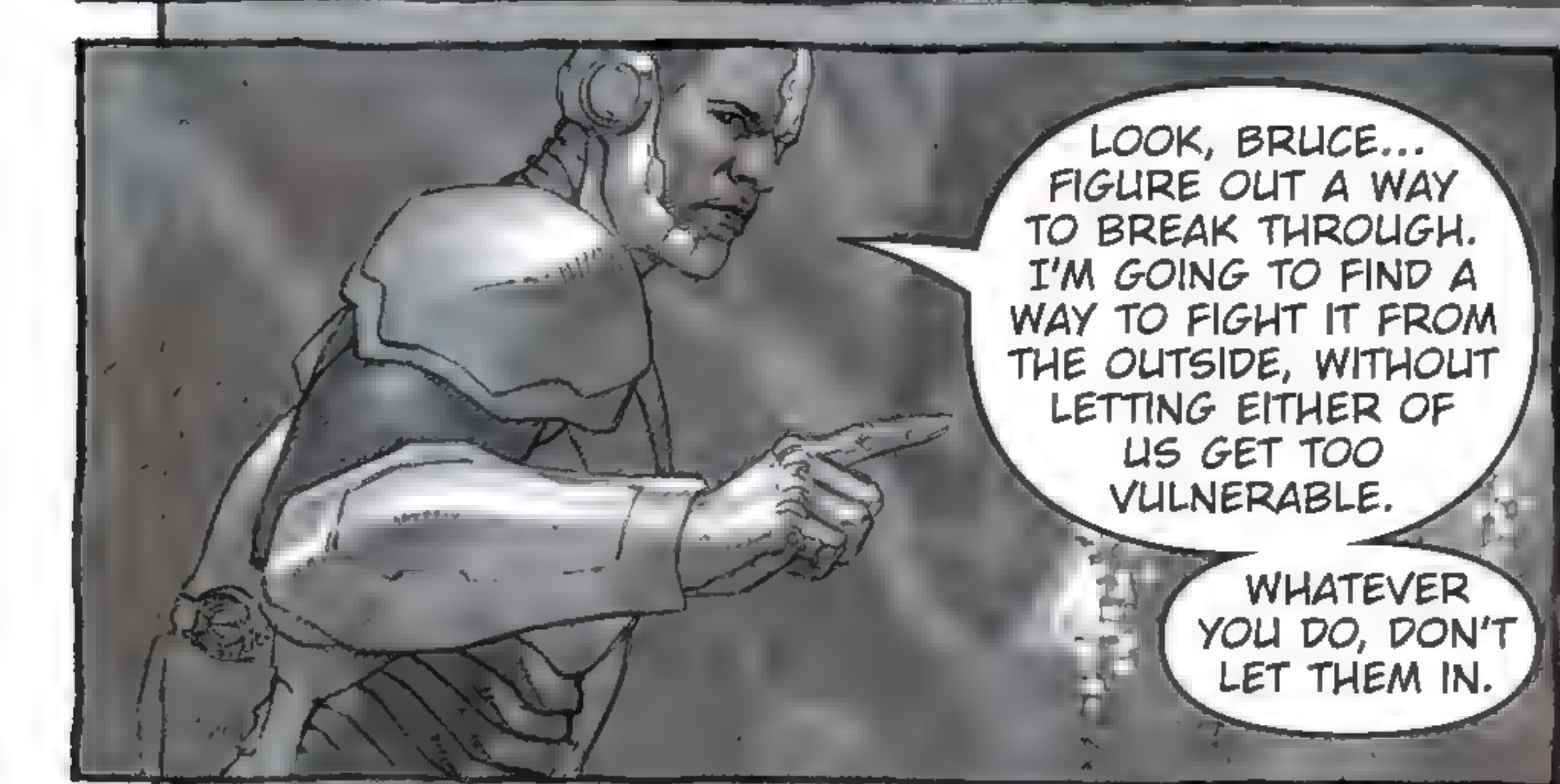


NO, BRUCE. YOU *CAN'T* DO THAT. THIS IS A HUNGRY *VIRUS* LOOKING TO FEED AND SPREAD.

I ALREADY LOST HIM *ONCE*, VICTOR.

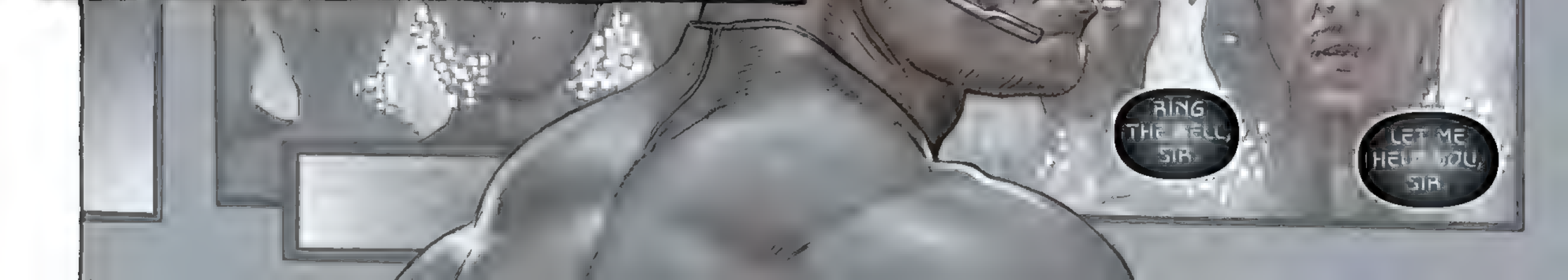
WE NEED TO COME UP WITH A WAY TO *DESTROY--*

I CAN *FIX* THIS. MAKE IT *BETTER*. AND *KEEP* HIM.



LOOK, BRUCE... FIGURE OUT A WAY TO BREAK THROUGH. I'M GOING TO FIND A WAY TO FIGHT IT FROM THE OUTSIDE, WITHOUT LETTING EITHER OF US GET TOO VULNERABLE.

WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T LET THEM IN.



LET ME IN, SIR.

RING THE BELL, SIR.

LET ME HELP YOU, SIR.

YOU WERE
WRONG, VIC.
THE BEST THING
I EVER DID WAS
LET HIM IN.

I STILL
REMEMBER THE FEAR
WHEN THEY SURROUNDED ME.
I REALIZED QUICKLY THAT MY
PLAN WAS NOT GOING TO WORK.
I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO
AFFECT THE PROGRAM
IN TIME.

AND WHEN
THEY GRABBED
ONTO ME, STARTED TO
SPREAD THROUGH MY
ENTIRE BODY, I WAS
FOOLISH ENOUGH
TO SCREAM
IN FEAR.

THAT WAS THE
FIRST THING MY FATHER
FIXED IN ME. HE TOOK MY
ABILITY TO FEEL FEAR AWAY.
MY ABILITY TO FEEL SADNESS.
YOU KNOW, TO THAT POINT I
HAD SPENT MY LIFE OBSESSING
OVER MY LOST BIRTH PARENTS,
IGNORING THE ONE WHO WAS
THERE RIGHT IN FRONT
OF ME. I WAS FREE OF
THAT AS WELL.

NEXT CAME
MY WEAK, HUMAN
FLESH. IT WAS GROWING
OLDER AND MORE
BRAITTE BY
THE DAY.

UHH...

HE REBUILT
ME. MADE ME
STR--

I
REMEMBER
WHAT IT'S LIKE
BEING REBUILT
FROM THE GROUND
UP. BEEN THERE.
DONE THAT.

FOOOOM!

BUT I CAN
PROMISE YOU ONE
THING. YOU CAN THROW EVERY
ROBO-ALFRED IN THE WORLD AT
ME, BUT YOU'RE **NOT** GETTING
ACCESS TO THE WATCHTOWER
COMPUTER SYSTEM.

I HAVE BEEN
OUTMANEUVERING
EVERY ATTEMPT
YOU'VE MADE TO
HACK THE SYSTEM
IN THE LAST FEW
MINUTES.

YOU'RE **NOT**
GETTING IN. I
BUILT THESE
COMPUTERS.

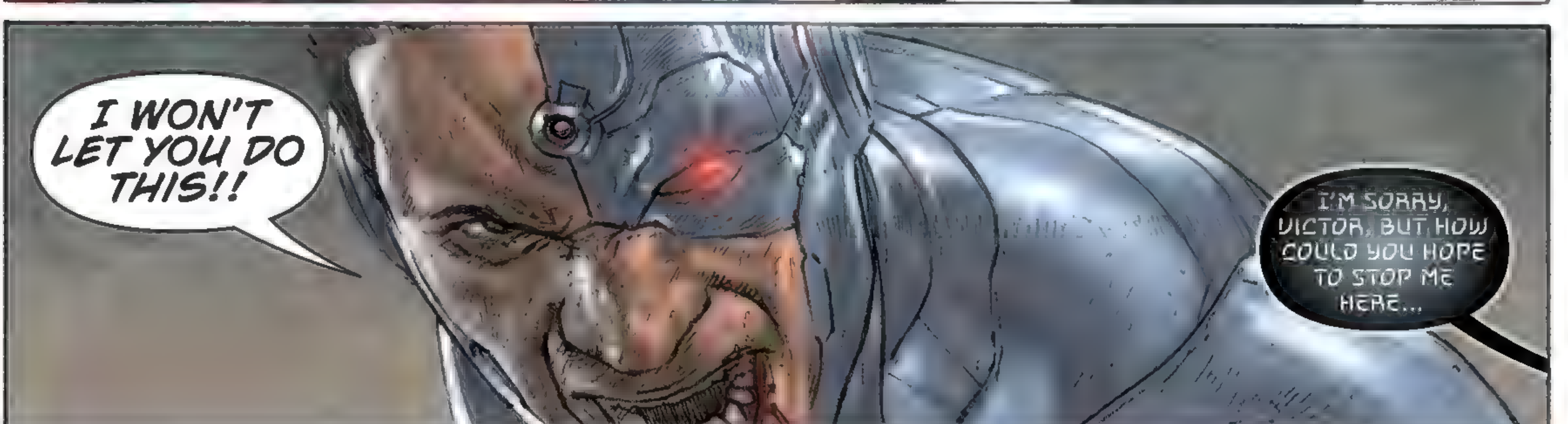
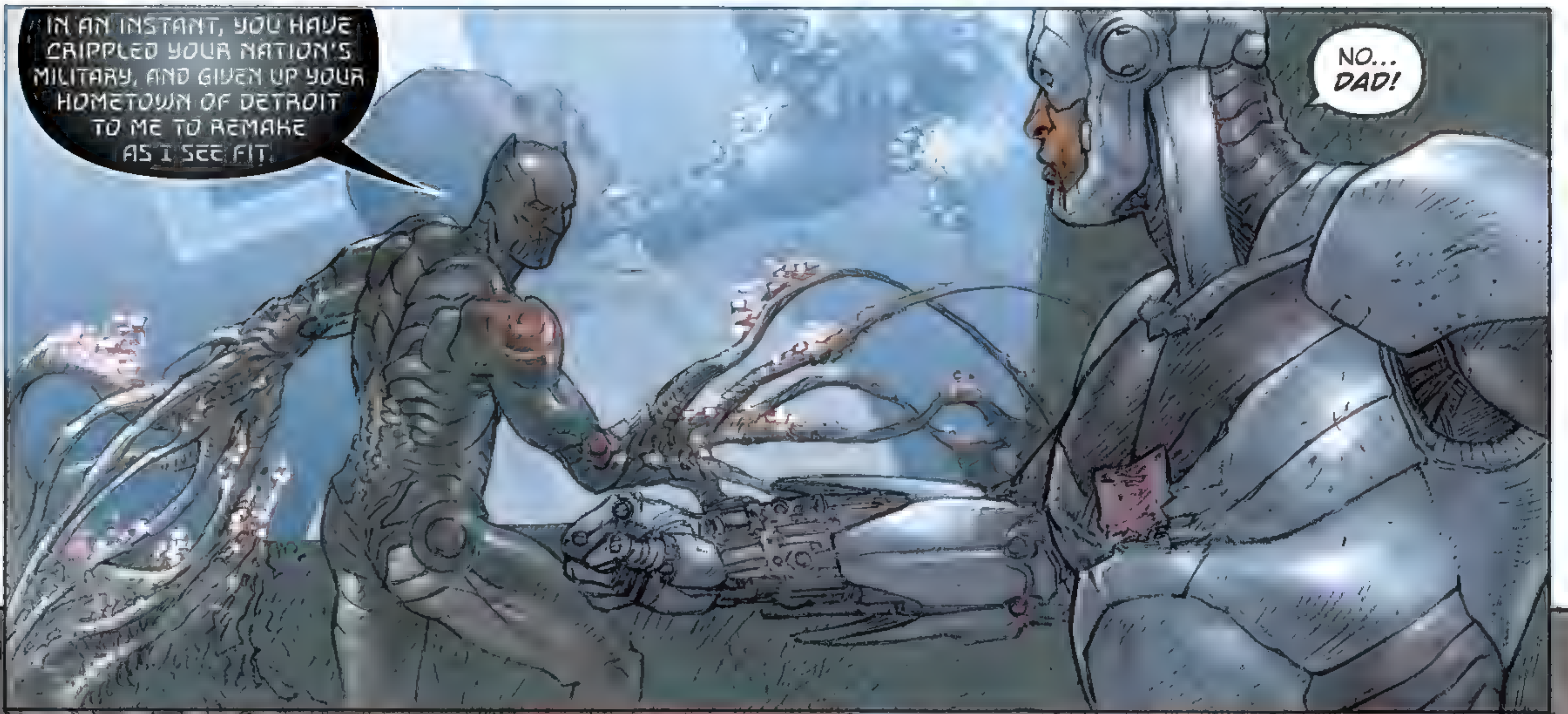
IF
ANYTHING,
YOU'VE OPENED
YOURSELF UP
TO **ME**.

SHOONK

I DON'T HAVE
ANY WEAKNESSES TO
EXPLOIT, VICTOR. MY
FATHER MADE ME
THAT WAY.

I AM
SORRY THAT
YOUR FATHER
DIDN'T DO THE
SAME FOR
YOU.

YOU FAILED
TO SEE THAT I HAVE
NO INTEREST IN YOUR
COMPUTER SYSTEMS.
I WANTED THE
COMPUTER SYSTEMS
IN S.T.A.R. LABS IN
DETROIT.



"...WHEN YOU COULDN'T STOP ME ON MY WORLD?"

"AFTER I BECAME ONE WITH MY FATHER, YOU GATHERED THE LEAGUE TO TRY AND FIGHT BACK. BUT I COULDN'T ALLOW THAT, COULD I?"

"THEY FELL, ONE BY ONE, UNTIL YOU WERE THE LAST MAN STANDING."

LISTEN TO ME, BRUCE.

I KNOW YOU'RE STILL IN THERE. I KNOW YOU CAN STILL HEAR ME.

THE PROTOCOL IS TRYING TO SHUT ME DOWN, BUT I'M STILL ALIVE BECAUSE YOU WANT TO LISTEN TO ME.

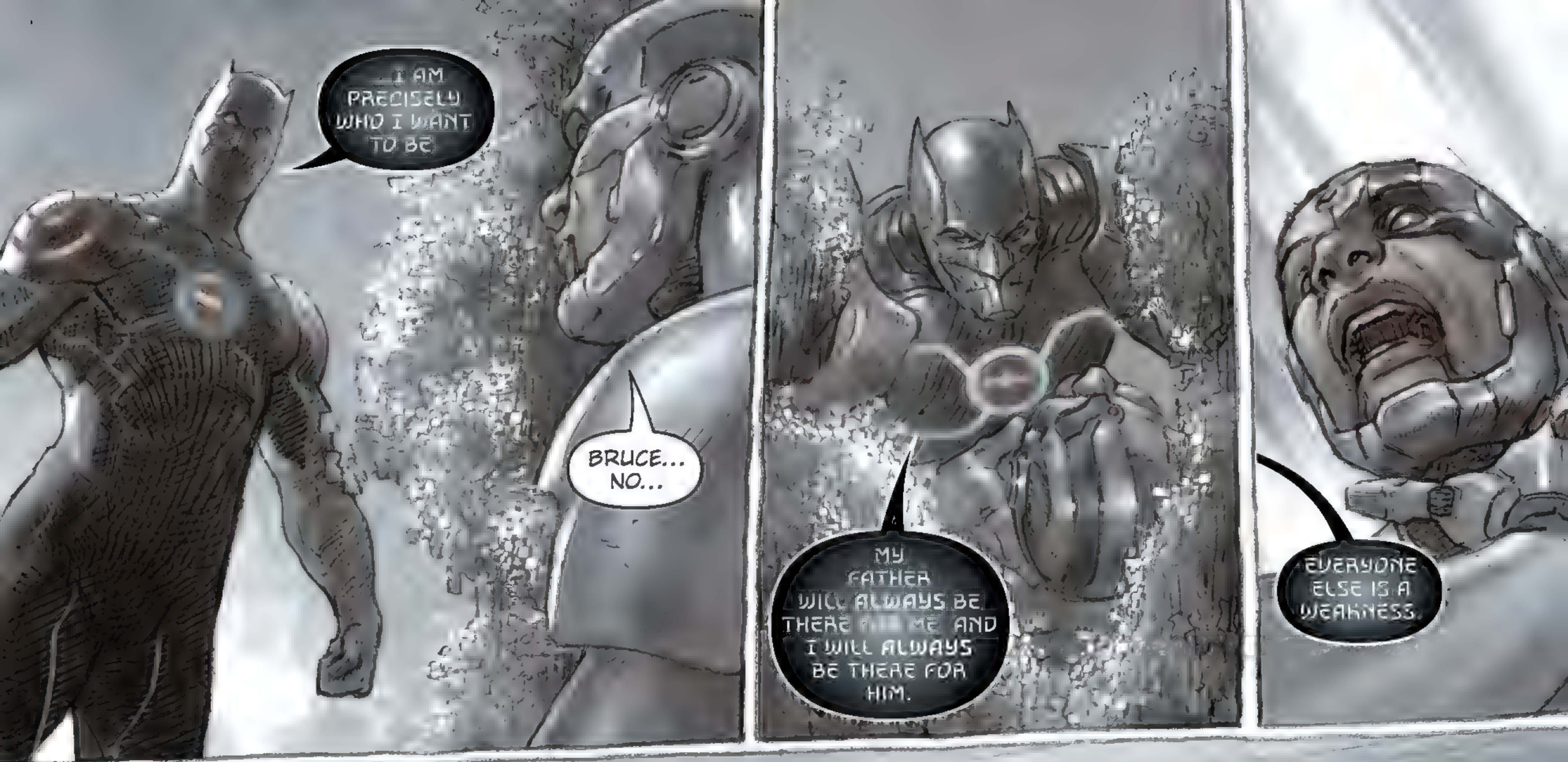
THE BEST PART OF YOU IS YOUR HUMANITY.

WE CAN STOP IT BEFORE IT REWRITES YOU ENTIRELY. YOU JUST HAVE TO WANT IT.

IT WILL DO WHAT YOU WANT, BRUCE.

YOU CAN LET GO OF ALFRED AND BE YOURSELF AGAIN. YOU DON'T HAVE TO LET YOURSELF BECOME SOME KIND OF HORRIBLE MURDER MACHINE!

DICTIONARY



I AM
PRECISELY
WHO I WANT
TO BE

BRUCE...
NO...

MY
FATHER
WILL ALWAYS BE
THERE FOR ME AND
I WILL ALWAYS
BE THERE FOR
HIM.

EVERYONE
ELSE IS A
WEAKNESS.



A
WEAKNESS
I AM READY
TO SHED.

SHRIIIIIIP

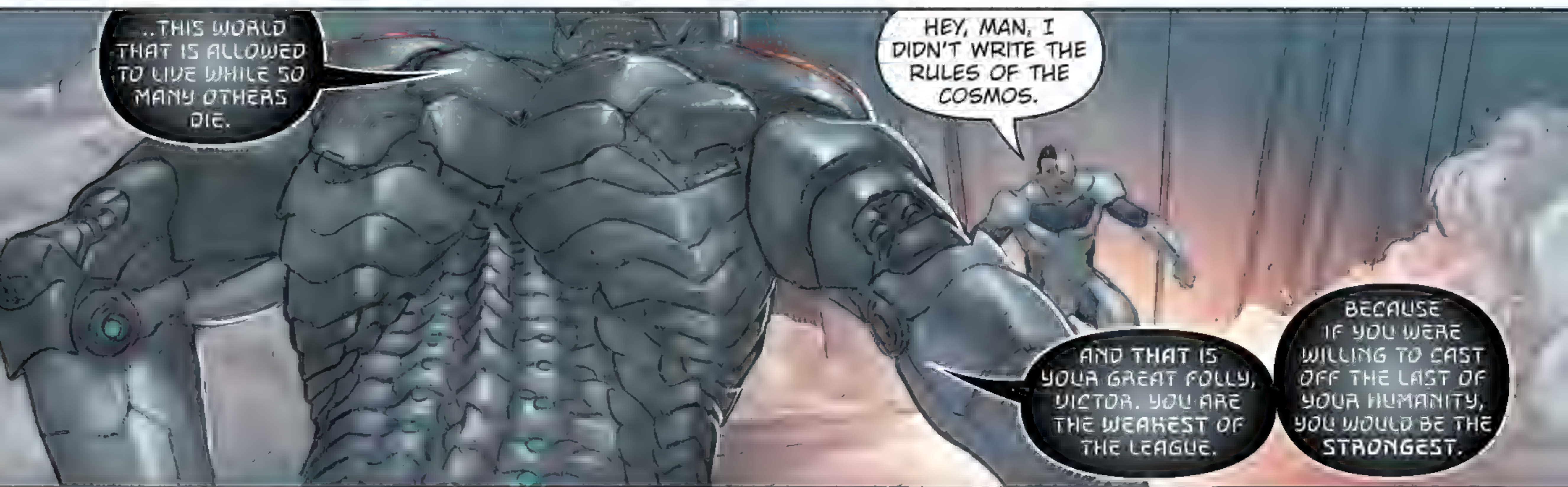


"YOUR DEATH SHOULD
HAVE HERALDED MY
GREAT BEGINNING..."

"...BUT BY A CRUEL TRICK OF
THE COSMOS, MY WORLD COULD
NOT BE MADE

"...I WOULD LATER
LEARN HOW IT WAS
DESTINED TO
COLLAPSE INTO
NOTHINGNESS.

"AND I WOULD LEARN
OF ANOTHER PATH.
ANOTHER WORLD..."



..THIS WORLD
THAT IS ALLOWED
TO LIVE WHILE SO
MANY OTHERS
DIE.

HEY, MAN, I
DIDN'T WRITE THE
RULES OF THE
COSMOS.

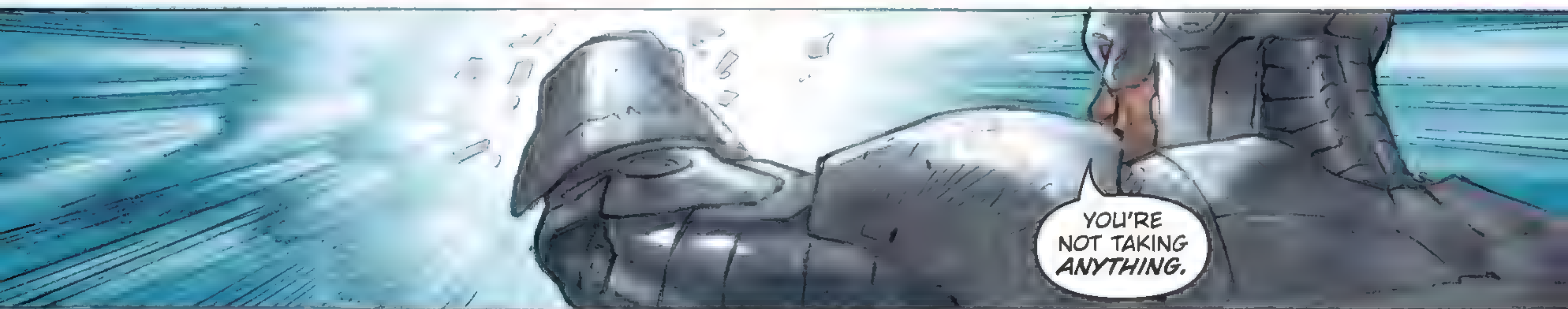
AND THAT IS
YOUR GREAT FOLLY,
VICTOR. YOU ARE
THE WEAKEST OF
THE LEAGUE.

BECAUSE
IF YOU WERE
WILLING TO CAST
OFF THE LAST OF
YOUR HUMANITY,
YOU WOULD BE THE
STRONGEST.

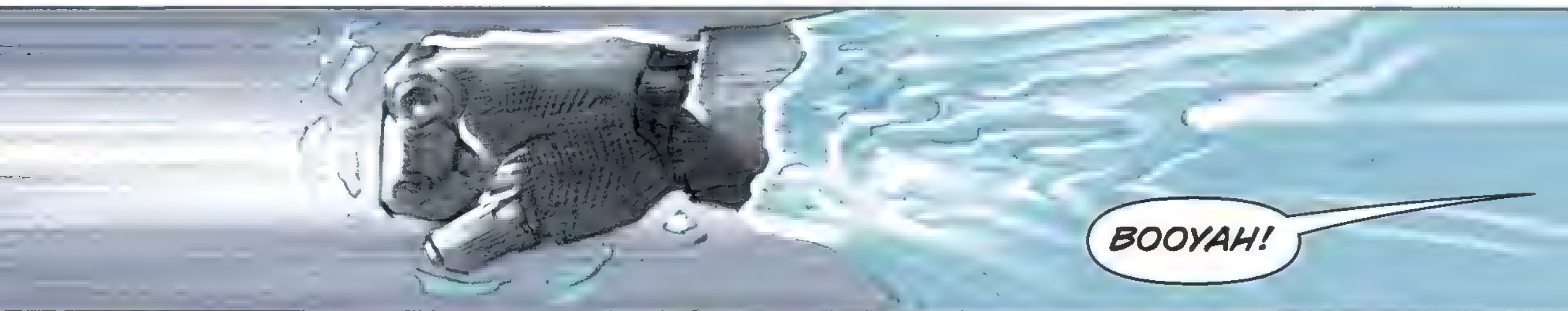


YOU HAVE NO COMPREHENSION
OF THE POWER THAT RESIDES
WITHIN YOU.

AND
SO WE WILL TAKE
IT TO REWRITE YOUR
WORLD INTO
SOMETHING BETTER.
IN THE NAME OF
BARBATOS.



YOU'RE
NOT TAKING
ANYTHING.



BOOYAH!



YOU BELIEVE
YOUR LOVE FOR
OTHERS MAKES YOU
STRONGER? LET
ME PROVE YOU
WRONG.

I WILL
UNMUTE YOUR
FATHER NOW. I
WOULD LIKE
HIM TO HEAR
THIS.



W-WHAT?

AAAAA

V-VICTOR,
IS THAT
YOU?

SUBDUE
HIM

VICTOR?







THANK YOU, DR. STONE. YOU HAVE BEEN OF GREAT SERVICE TO US.

ONE OF MY ASSOCIATES WILL BE GATHERING YOU SOON, SO YOU WILL CONTINUE TO BE.

NO! I WON'T LET YOU--

TERMINATE CALL



HE REALLY HAD NO IDEA, DID HE?



JUST THINK HOW MUCH TROUBLE THAT METAL COULD HAVE CAUSED US, IF HE HAD ANY IDEA HOW TO WIELD IT.

GOOD THING HE'S GOT SOME OLD FRIENDS TO SHOW HIM THE WAY.

N-NUH.



OH, HUSH NOW, VICTOR. DON'T TRY TO SPEAK. I KNOW WE MUST SEEM LIKE CRUEL MONSTERS OF NIGHTMARE, CRAWLING OUT OF THE ABYSS TO RUN OVER YOUR WORLD.

AND IN A WAY, WE ARE.

W-WHY...?

"THE TRUTH IS, WE'RE ONLY
HERE BECAUSE THE WORLD
WAS DARK ENOUGH TO DREAM
US INTO EXISTENCE. BECAUSE
DEEP DOWN, IT **NEEDED** US.

"TO PROTECT THEM
FROM THEMSELVES. WE
ALL HEARD IT, ECHOING
THROUGH THE COSMOS,
THROUGH THE VERY
FIRMAMENT.

"A GREAT
RINGING.

"AND WE CAME. NOT
WITH A QUESTION OF
HOW TO HELP YOU.

"BUT WITH AN
ANSWER."

TO BE CONTINUED
NEXT WEEK IN



SOME
PEOPLE DESERVE
TO DIE.

MICHAEL CLAY



TM & © DC Comics.

A NEW MONTHLY SERIES FROM
THE PAGES OF THE WILD STORM

WRITTEN BY

WARREN ELLIS

ART BY

DEXTER VINES

BRYAN HILL WITH
N. STEVEN HARRIS AND

OCTOBER

COWAN / SIEMKIEWICZ



BATMAN: WHITE KNIGHT

**JOKER SETS OUT
TO BEAT BATMAN
BY BECOMING THE
WHITE KNIGHT
THAT GOTHAM
REALLY NEEDS.**

Batman has been a hero for decades, constantly saving Gotham City from mad men and murderers. But take away the cape and noble purpose and he's actually a terror—someone capable of causing as much damage as he prevents. In a new 7-issue limited alternate-reality comic series, it's the Joker—cured of his insanity—who sees that Bruce Wayne is just another part of the city's vicious cycle of crime and sets out to stop him.

Superstar writer and artist Sean Gordon Murphy (PUNK ROCK JESUS, THE WAKE) brings you his tale of a twisted Gotham with a massive cast of heroes and villains. **BATMAN: WHITE KNIGHT** is told on an epic scale, but at the heart of it all is the tragic story of a hero and a villain, the Batman and the Joker. The question is, which one is the hero and which one is the villain...?

The Joker's been called a maniac, a killer and the "Clown Prince of Crime," but a "white knight"? Never. Until now...

"We know Joker's a genius, we know he's relentless, and we know he can play the crowd, so why not make him a politician?" said Murphy. "Why not strip away the psychosis (the thing that's holding him back) and let him challenge Batman unimpeded? And to make it even scarier, what if he did it legally and without breaking any rules, so that Batman couldn't stop him?"

"My main goal was to undo the comic tropes while changing Gotham from a comic book city into a real city—a city dealing with everything from Black Lives Matter to the growing wage gap," Murphy says. "[But] rather than write a comic about the wage gap, I gave those ideas to the Joker, who leads a kind of media war against Gotham's elite by winning people over with his potent observations and rhetoric."



IN STORES **OCTOBER 4**



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